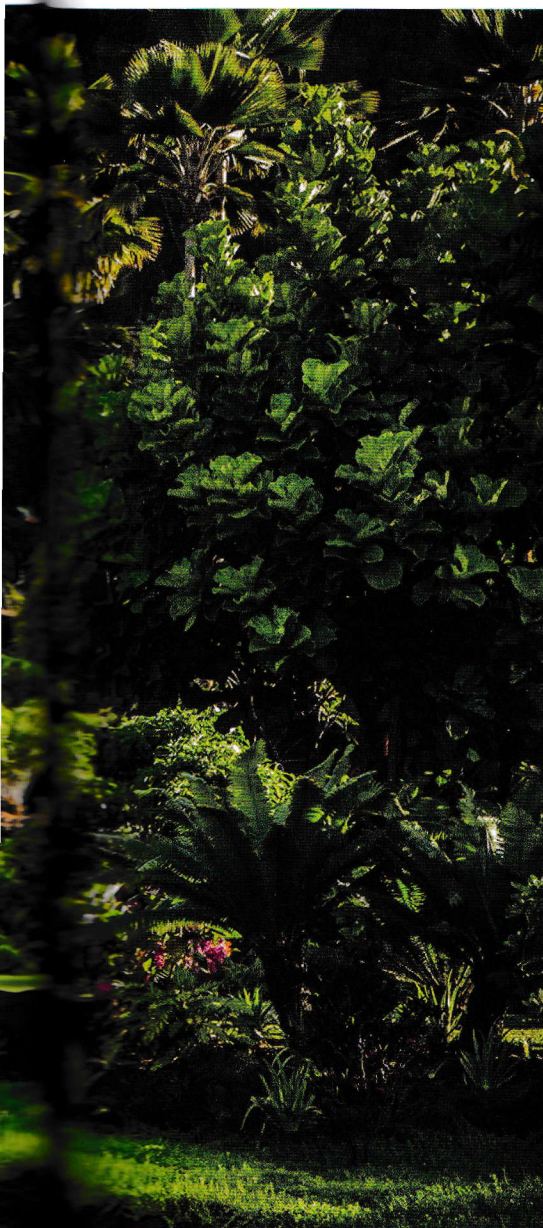




HEALING THE MIND AND BODY ON LĀNA‘I

THE SPIRITUAL ISLAND REMAINS A WELCOME PLACE OF REFUGE

BY NATALIE COMPAGNO AND GREG FREITAS



Lānaʻi has always been a sacred place. Hawaiians believed that the fertile lands of Lānaʻi were blessed by Lono, the god of agriculture. Hawaiian chiefs and their families lived on Lānaʻi, bringing spirituality and rituals to the ancient “heiau” (tall rock temple) and other religious sites. Most important, Lānaʻi was considered a place of refuge, a tradition known as “puʻuhonua,” where those seeking safety could find sanctuary.

Today, Lānaʻi still offers respite from the harsh world. People come to Hawaii’s most peaceful island for nurturing and tranquility, to connect with a partner or themselves, and to slow down long enough to listen to their inner voice.

Sensei Lānaʻi is a wellness haven among the cool, misty, pine-dotted mountains. The resort is carefully curated to meet guests where they are in their well-being journey, and to guide them through personal goals and intentions. The concept of “move, nourish, and rest” is found throughout the property, from its state of the art 24-hour

Left: Enjoy the spa and fitness facilities at Sensei Lānaʻi. Below: Saul Kahihkolo, Jr., and Mike Weinstein of Na Ho Aloha provide entertainment.

exercise pavilion to lakeside yoga platforms, to the lush, meditation gardens.

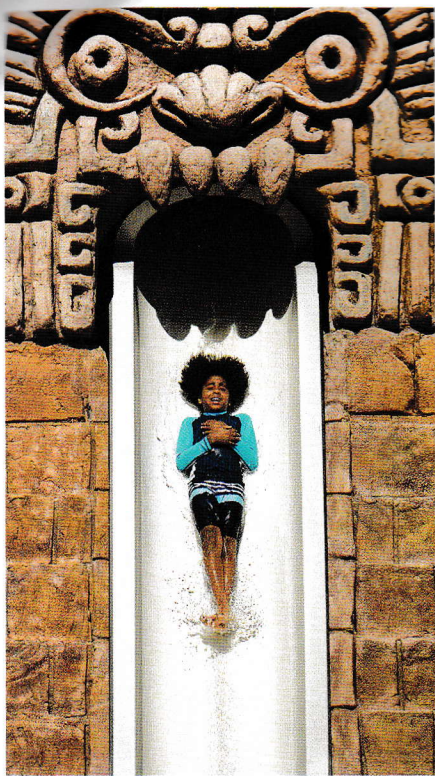
The resort’s goal is to help people live longer and better, something everyone desires. The stress of 21st-century “always-on” mentality can be put on pause for a brief time. Guests meet with a guide for a signature one-on-one session where they plan their stay and activities to match their needs. Sleep issues could be addressed through meditation or forest bathing, strength and flexibility through restorative aerial yoga or functional fascia classes. The menu at **Sensei by Nobu** turns simple, healthy dishes like vegetable miso soup, seared tuna salad, and shabu shabu into flavors that linger on the palate and mind for days.

Reserve a private “hale” alone or with a partner for signature services such as thermal body mapping and massage treatment or aquatic bodywork. The space feels like a shogun’s boudoir with an entryway, soaking tub, shower, outdoor waterfall, and pool. Afterward, meander throughout the garden and property in awe of the art collection. Jeff Koons, Jaume Plensa, and Fernando Botero are to be found among the masterworks.

A do-not-shy-away-from, absolute-must experience happens right next door at the **Lānaʻi Adventure Park**. The challenge course takes the brave on a journey of shock, fear, and finally total exhilaration as the harnessed participants climb 50-foot walls, walk on slippery logs between pines high above the forest floor, and jump like flying squirrels onto dangling handlebars with nothing beneath them — all guided by an experienced and incredibly soothing staff. The heart-pounding pride couples or groups experience together is a bonding euphoria. The park also offers guided e-bike tours, either along dirt roads to the stunning vantage at the **Valley of the Gods**, or as a wonderful way to explore the island.

After the adrenaline rush, the pool at Sensei Lānaʻi is refreshing, with its foliage-hidden secluded hot tubs and lounges. Soak in the more private onsens with bubbling connected water-





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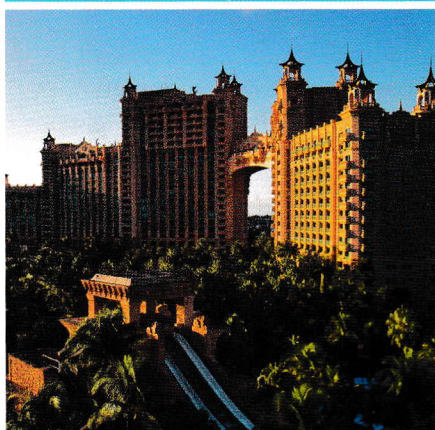
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ways for another rejuvenating option. Or perhaps it's time for the restorative properties of the crystal blue Pacific.

Fortunately, the **Four Seasons Lāna'i** — Sensei's sister property on the south shore — also faces one of the finest beaches in the state. **Hulopo'e Bay** has incredible swimming and snorkeling in a protected cove that rarely receives heavy surf. Surrounded by tide pools filled with a bounty of marine life, the bay receives frequent visits from spinner dolphins and humpback whales.

A short hike along the cliffs leads to **Pu'upehe**, also known as **Sweetheart Rock**. The legend of Pu'upehe, a warrior from Lāna'i who leaps to his death after losing his beloved, is one of Hawaii's best-known stories. Modern travelers can reach the spot via a 15-minute hike up a short path from the hotel. It is a magnificent place to watch the sun melt into the sea.

The Four Seasons and Sensei Lāna'i have a regular shuttle service for guests between the two, so consider a beach swim and then stay for dinner at dusk. **One Forty** serves fresh Hawaiian fish expertly grilled, as well as wagyu and other cuts of beef. After sunset cocktails and photos, order the seafood tower and prepare to indulge in the bounty of the ocean.

The Adventure Tower is just one of many attractions at Lāna'i Adventure Park.

Lāna'i City is a nice walk or shuttle ride from Sensei Lāna'i and well worth a visit. The lively square fills with locals and day trippers from the **Maui ferry**, stocking up at markets and enjoying meals. **Lāna'i City Service Station** is where the locals go for plate lunch. The former plantation store and gas station makes a great place to eavesdrop and people watch. Other local favorites include **Blue Ginger Café** for breakfast — the linguica omelet — and **Ganotisi's** for Filipino Pacific fusion. If you lose your suitcase or need to shop for a special someone, head to **The Local Gentry**. The well-curated boutique is filled with tropical-chic things to wear, that perfect tee, and unique souvenirs of Lāna'i.

Stop into the **Lāna'i Art Center** to learn about the surprisingly robust local art scene or take a class and meet some of the lucky people who live on the island. Purchase art to take home — from **Hinu Rise** to **Mos Masicampo** — or discover **Mike Carroll**, Lāna'i's best-known artist with a gallery nearby. End this walking tour with happy hour at the **Lāna'i City Bar & Grill** in the **Hotel Lāna'i**. Enjoy the convivial blend of Hawaiians, haoles, kama'āina, travelers, and tourists, all enjoying the spirit of aloha. ■

